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ence, being a peculiarly wretched example of the inequality of the distribution of happiness," and many writers of more recent date, despite the eloquent refutation of the calumny by our greatest ornithologist, Alexander Wilson, seem to be imbued with a like spirit. But what is the true state of the case as vouched for in the testimony of every true working, field ornithologist?

A beneficent Providence has richly endowed the family of woodpeckers with qualities of rare excellence and worth. Especially is this true of the hairy. The principal count in the indictment against him, that he bores the bark of fruit and other trees in order to feed upon the sap and inner bark, will not stand, being utterly false. An extended examination of the contents of the stomach of this bird invariably fails to disclose an appreciable amount of either, but in their stead a huge mass of insects and larvæ. The perforations which he makes are merely for the purpose of securing his quarry from their ensconce neath the bark out of the reach of other agencies. His is a work of destruction and death—the dislodgment and consuming of myriads of borers, &c.—not harm to the tree, but beneficial, as attested in innumerable instances. In this despised, persecuted bird, we have a true friend and effective co-worker, very materially assisting us in gathering an ample return of perfect fruit for the labor and care expended to this end in orchard, vineyard or garden. Ignorance and prejudice have no place amid the general intelligence and humane principles of to-day and should not be tolerated. Let no one, then, wantonly destroy either eggs or parent bird, but carefully foster and protect them, even using his influence to secure the punishment of all thus rendering themselves amenable to law and the just condemnation of every intelligent person.

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EDITORS' TABLE.

EDITORS: A. S. PACKARD, JR., AND E. D. COPE.

— The Government of the United States is displaying a liberality towards scientific research which is worthy of high praise. The position assumed by our legislators on this subject is in accordance with the spirit of the age, and represents the intellectual status of the American people among the civilized nations. The appropriations made by Congress for the development and exposition of our resources have kept pace in amount with the increase

of our population, and the development of intelligence. Thanks to the character of the representatives of science at the seat of government, the expenditure of this money has been mostly wisely directed. A full share of support has been given to abstract science as distinguished from economic science. This is cause for congratulation, for in this utilitarian country, pure science is too often undervalued. It is remarkable, how, even in this day, the development of the mental instincts of our species may be neglected for the purely physical, as though human happiness did not depend as much on healthy mental as on bodily states. To state the case more precisely, human happiness depends as much or more on pleasant sensations (thoughts, etc.) of the brain, as on pleasant sensations of the skin and stomach. By purveying to the first-named organs our rulers receive the lively thanks of all people in whom the said organ has been developed into a large and active efficiency.

One of the most satisfactory features of our Government scientific work has been the liberality with which the books and atlases have been distributed. It is true that by this means some, perhaps, a good many copies, have fallen into unsuitable hands. But this is a slight offset to the great benefits done to scientific men of little means, to whom many of these publications are absolute necessities. We do not join in the cry of waste of Government money raised, because many of these works are temporarily sent in quantities to second-hand book-stores, etc., for ultimately they find their way into appreciative hands. We do not conceive that the recent change in the work of distribution is an advance on the old one. It is now the rule that a certain large class of scientific publications shall be sold at cost of production, and not be given away as heretofore. Apart from the hardship thus inflicted on the poorer scientific workers, as a simple question of right, the people are entitled to these works, since they are produced at the public expense and paid for by the peoples' money. What reason could have induced this change of policy we are at a loss to understand. It does not seem to be in the interest of science.

— The latest accession to the antivivisectionists (*beastiarrians* Owen) is Prince Bismarck. From his distinguished services in the past as a humanitarian, we anticipate for him great success as a *beastiarrian*. Woerth, Gravelotte and Sedan all bear witness to the skill of his employés in humanitarianism; and as his facilities for "removing" people are still considerable, we expect to see the physiologists of Germany abolished; for surgeons only will be necessary under the reign of "humanity." Then the *beastiarrians* who serve in the German army will be able the better in future wars to carry out the humane behests of the great Prime Minister.